



## Introduction

Welcome to the 8<sup>th</sup> Newsletter of the Umayyad Project!

The purpose of this Newsletter is to provide information and updates for the Umayyad Project.

Umayyad Project is co-financed by the multilateral cross-border cooperation programme ENPI CBC MED funded by the European Union. It aims to reinforce cooperation between the EU and partner country regions located along the shores of the Mediterranean Sea.

The 2007-2013 ENPI CBC Mediterranean Sea Basin Programme is a multilateral Cross-Border Cooperation initiative funded by the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI). The Programme objective is to promote the sustainable and harmonious cooperation process at the Mediterranean Basin level by dealing with the common challenges and enhancing its endogenous potential. It finances cooperation projects as a contribution to the economic, social, environmental and cultural development of the Mediterranean region.

The following 14 countries participate in the Programme: Cyprus, Egypt, France, Greece, Israel, Italy, Jordan, Lebanon, Malta, Palestine, Portugal, Spain, Syria (participation currently suspended), Tunisia. The Joint Managing Authority (JMA) is the Autonomous Region of Sardinia (Italy). Official Programme languages are Arabic, English and French ([www.enpicbcmmed.eu](http://www.enpicbcmmed.eu)).

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Since two years we are on the best way to achieve our goals and this publication will show you how we did it. Please enjoy the following most important news and our main achievements.

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## Public representatives met the Lebanese Minister of Tourism to inform about the Umayyad project

The Lebanese American University (LAU), Safadi Foundation, the Municipality of Byblos and the Municipality of Anjar met the Minister of Tourism, his Exc. Mr. Michel Pharaon on July, the 14<sup>th</sup>.

The Minister was informed in details and was updated about the project progress and upcoming deliverables. He expressed his interest of having a detailed package to be promoted by tour operators in Lebanon and declared his full support for the promotion of the Umayyad project.



## Third Meeting of the Umayyad Project Advisory Board

The Advisory Committee Meeting of the Umayyad Route was held last September, the 3<sup>rd</sup>. The meeting was chaired by H.E. Dr. Munther Jamhawi, who in addition to being a member, was deputed to represent H.E. Mr. Nayef Al Fayiz, Minister of Tourism and Antiquities of Jordan.



The full attendance list:

1. Dr. Munther Jamhawi, DOA Director.
2. rab Dr. Abed Alrazzaq Arabiyat. JTB Director.
3. Eng. Ihab Amareen Jordan Museum Directore.
4. Mr. Ibrahim Laafia, EU Delegation.
5. Dr. Esmat Karadsheh, ENPI CBCMED
6. Mr. Awni Qawar, Petra Tours.
7. Arch. Firas Rabadi, Greater Amman Municipality.
8. Eng. Shadi Qusus, Ministry of tourism.
9. Dr. Ahmad Momani, Jordan Museum.
10. Mr. Goncalo Guedes, EU Delegation.
11. Mr. Nabih Riyal, Plaza Tours.
12. Dr. Talal Akasheh, Cultech.
13. Arch. Leen Fakhoury, Cultech
14. Mr. Mohammad Debajah, Cultech.



On this meeting was discussed the Local Action Plan, the Umayyad exhibition, the fam trip to Spain and the 6<sup>th</sup> Steering Committee Meeting in Jordan, as the next steps in the implementation of the project.

## The Umayyad Capacity Building in Spain



Andalusian SMEs are developing their skills on how to manage the on line reputation of their company thanks to the Umayyad Capacity Building organized by the Council of Chambers of Commerce. The Umayyad Capacity Building sessions were held in Spain in the city of Écija on September, the 28<sup>th</sup> until the 29<sup>th</sup>, and in Carmona on September, the 30<sup>th</sup> and on October, the 1<sup>st</sup>.

## All partners met at Amman (Jordan) in the 6th Steering Committee Meeting

The 6<sup>th</sup> Steering Committee Meeting of the Umayyad Project was held in Amman (Jordan) from the last 6<sup>th</sup> until the 8<sup>th</sup> of October. Partners discussed about all the crucial issues concerning the project and analyzed the current situation and future's perspectives.

On the first day, there was an overall review of the project state and plans regarding the developed objectives, as the project will end in close future, on December of this year. Among the activities to carry out, the communication issues were an important point to be developed at this meeting (e.g., thematic forums, press releases, leaflets, articles) under Work Package 2. After, partners went through WP3 (capitalization) with Federation of Egyptian Chambers of Commerce Alexandria Chamber.

Furthermore, there was a discussion about national and local travel packages where each country presented its national and local travel packages and there were also bilateral meetings; and, finally, under WP1, there was a presentation on financial monitoring and preparation of final report.





During the 2<sup>nd</sup> day, a field visit to the Umayyad itinerary took place at the Desert Castles. The target of this visit were SMEs, entrepreneurs and professionals of the tourism industry, institutional agents and relevant stakeholders belonging to the tourism industry and cultural sector coming from Portugal, Spain, Italy, Tunisia, Jordan, Egypt and Lebanon. The main goal of this visit was the exchange of good practices between the institutional agents and relevant stakeholders of the tourism industry and cultural sector from the participant countries (Algarve-Portugal, Andalusia-Spain, Sicily-Italy, Tunisia-Tunis, Lebanon, Jordan and Egypt). They will transfer the good practices learnt during the event to the rest of the members of their respective Local Support Groups in their countries.







The last day was occupied by the elaboration and review of the Local Action Plan and the planning of the study visit for policy-makers and entrepreneurs that will be held in Spain under Work Package 4. Besides, review of the Steering Committee agreements and the next activities to be carried out were presented.



Finally, the Opening Ceremony of the Umayyad Exhibition organized by the Jordan partner took place at the Jordan Museum.

## Entrepreneurs field visit to the Umayyad Desert Castles: Qasr Kharana, Qusayr Amra, Qasr el Azraq and Qasr Hallabat



On the third day of the entrepreneurs trip to Jordan, the group met at the Department of Antiquities and a round of discussion took place with representatives and LSG members in Jordan, then the group moved to the Municipality of Amman where they were welcomed by members of the municipality and another discussion took place. After lunch, the group visited the Citadel of Amman and ended the day with the Umayyad Exhibition at the Museum of Jordan.



After a memorable trip to Petra with partners, entrepreneurs and policy makers from different countries of the Umayyad Route, the last of the invitees to Jordan had a quick visit to the must-see Museum of Jordan in Amman and headed back to their countries. A trip full of information, positive networking, new friends and colleagues and lots of good memories to ponder on. We thank the Jordanian partners for their amazing hospitality and hope to see the partners again in Spain in November for the upcoming policymakers visit to Sevilla and Cordova.



# Opening Ceremony of the Umayyad Exhibition at the Jordan Museum



On October, the 8<sup>th</sup> the Opening Ceremony of the Umayyad Exhibition at the Jordan Museum took place.

Night at the Jordan Museum is an event organized under the patronage of Akel Biltaji Mayor of the Greater Amman Municipality. The organizers are the EU delegation Office in Amman, The Jordan Museum, the EU ENPI-CBCMED program, and Cultech (Taqniyat At Turath).

Taqniyat At Turath is a special non profit and non governmental organization that deals with the conservation and preservation of the cultural heritage of Jordan and the Middle East region.

The exhibition held at the Jordan Museum on October, the 8<sup>th</sup> was about the Umayyad Route project. The HE of The Minister of Tourism and HE the Mayor of Greater Amman Municipality signed the pledge during the opening ceremony of the exhibition. Given the wide area of development cooperation between the EU and Jordan, it was deemed appropriate that the exhibition will include some examples of other ENPI projects as well as cooperation programs funded by the EU, as a celebration of a European-Jordanian Cooperation Day, within the "European Cooperation Day" normally celebrated in September every year.

The exhibition coincides with the arrival of members of the Steering Committee of the Umayyad project, to hold one of their meetings in Amman last October, the 6<sup>th</sup>. The committee was accompanied by policymakers and tourism entrepreneurs from the seven countries partnering in the project. They met the director of the department of Antiquities on behalf of the Minister of Tourism and Antiquities as well as the Deputy Mayor of Amman, Jordanian officials and private sectors representatives to exchange experiences and best practice guidelines in the tourism promotion, management and marketing.



## Training and test trips for guides in Lebanon

On April, 24<sup>th</sup>, a capacity building workshop on product development and destination management was held in Beirut within the framework of the Umayyad Project. The main recommendation was to develop a solid story for the Umayyad Route and itineraries in Lebanon. After the Steering Committee in Faro last June, thanks to consultations with archeologist and LSG member, Dr. Wissam Al Khalil, budget modification was made, in order to develop the Umayyad story in Lebanon. Following consultation with the Lebanese partnership, it was decided to develop the theme of the Umayyad Dynasty and the trade routes in Lebanon.



The training sessions and test trips aimed:

- To inform a bigger number of tourist guides about the Umayyad Project and Lebanese Route.
- To provide in depth information about the Umayyad history in Lebanon and the relevance of the newly proposed itineraries to the Umayyad Story.
- To certify the guides who attend 2 training sessions and at least 1 fieldtrip as Umayyad tour guides, to lead on the proposed itineraries.



Last August, the Umayyad Story in Lebanon was developed, focusing this issue on commercial and trade routes. Subsequently, 5 itineraries were proposed following the trade routes that linked each of the five portal cities of Tripoli, Byblos, Beirut, Saida and Tyr to the Umayyad cities of Baalbek and Anjar in the valley of the Bekaa, while crossing Mount Lebanon. Under the patronage of the Ministry of Tourism and in collaboration with the syndicate of tourist guides, 2 training sessions were scheduled at the Ministry of Tourism in October 2015. The sessions were followed by 2 test trips in November 2015 - Chhim - Anjar / Byblos - Anjar) aiming to acquaint tourist guides and tour operators to the proposed itineraries.

Both sessions and trips were prepared and delivered/lead by archeologist Dr. Hassan el Akra & Dr. Wissam Khalil.

**More than 80 entrepreneurs and stakeholders from tourism sector in seven Mediterranean countries participated in a Study Visit, which took place in Seville, Madinat al-Zahra and Cordova last November 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>.**

Last November 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>, the Andalusian Council of Chambers of Commerce hosted in Seville and Cordova the representatives of the tourism sector from Portugal, Sicily, Lebanon, Egypt, Tunisia, Jordan and Andalusia in the Study Visit framed in the Umayyad project.





The main objective of the meeting was the good practices exchange in the field of cultural tourism among the relevant entrepreneurs and policy makers in the tourist and cultural sector of the participating countries of the project. These ones will act as ambassadors for their territories and thereafter will share the acquired knowledge with other representative members of the Local Support Group, already created in each country to reach public-private partnerships and to design cultural tourist itineraries, based on the legacy of the Umayyad dynasty.



Also this activity, organized by the Andalusian Council of Chambers of Commerce, aimed to involve the different stakeholders from the tourism sector in the management, promotion and dissemination of cultural tourism and to transfer best practices in order to create cultural tourism routes.

Last November the 10th, the headquarters of the Chamber of Commerce of Seville hosted the first activities, consisting of a series of presentations and round tables on the project. The program of this Conference was opened with a welcome speech of the President of the Council Andalusian Chambers of Commerce, Antonio Ponce, and the President of the Chamber of Commerce of Seville, Francisco Herrero, who acted as host of the meeting. Finally, the general Secretary of Culture of the Regional Ministry of Culture of Andalusia, Eduardo Tamarit, gave a welcome speech about the major axes of the cultural policy that are carried out in Andalusia at the present time.



Afterwards, the entrepreneurs participated in a Study Visit where they had the opportunity to exchange best practices in the cultural tourism sector during the panel discussion. Also, political and institutional stakeholders took part in the panel of experts and talked about the key issues for cultural tourism development and existing public support programs. Then took place the conference Cultural tourism as an opportunity of business and sustainable development in the territories in charge of tourist companies' expert, Domènec Biosca. This talk gave way to the participation of expert representatives of the seven countries in two round tables. In the first, entrepreneurs in the tourism sector presented examples of good practices in this sector in each of the countries. On this occasion, the turn corresponded to the institutional representatives in cultural tourism in Spain, Portugal, Italy, Tunisia, Lebanon and Jordan.

During the second day, participants visited the archaeological site of Madinat al-Zahra as an example of enhancement of heritage and the Umayyad Mosque of Cordova, and thus following the path of the Umayyads in Andalusia.

The expected outcome of the project is to create a joint tourist itineraries in the various member countries which are integrated into a transnational route for tourism in order to realize the Umayyad rich heritage of the countries involved, under a common tourism brand in the Mediterranean. The Umayyad project is co-financed from the ENPI CBC Med program.

